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ABSTRACT

A discussion of bilingualism in Australia begins with examination of the climate there for development of bilingualism, including specific supportive policies at both state and federal levels, increasing support for bilingualism within local communities, research providing evidence of the benefits of bilingualism, and technological developments that make educational programs more accessible and that can link interested groups. Discussion then turns to some unresolved issues. For families, these include difficulties in maintaining home languages (for immigrants) and when and how to support second language learning (for monolinguals), assuring English literacy, error correction at home, and choice of language variety (standard or local). For educators, issues include providing language learning opportunities for all students, maintaining home languages while integrating language groups, choice of program design, appropriate expectations and standards for second language learning, and teacher preparation and credentials. It is concluded that families, educators, and communities must establish common goals and develop a strategy of advocacy to encourage public policy supporting bilingual development. (Contains 28 references.) (MSE)

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University of Western Sydney

The National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia
Language Acquisition Research Centre

Australian Studies in Language Acquisition

LANGUAGE AUSTRALIA

Laurie Makin

Bilingual Development: Issues and Implications

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Bilingual Development:

Issues and Implications

Laurie Makin

NLLIA/LARC

University of Western Sydney, Macarthur

1997

Contents

Foreword iii

Introduction 1

The bilingual climate 2

Some issues for families 8

Issues for educators 15

Implications for families, educators and the community 24

References 31

Foreword

I have much pleasure in introducing this thought-provoking paper by Laurie Makin, which represents the fifth volume of Australian Studies in Language Acquisition.

LARC's core research mission is investigating language acquisition from a psychological perspective, whilst at the same time seeking ways to utilise such research findings to make syllabuses more effective. However, for syllabuses to be made more effective, they first have to exist and be available in our education systems. Laurie Makin's paper examines a number of important issues concerning provision being made for the development and fostering of children's bilingualism in Australian homes and schools. She analyses how Australia has, to a large extent, neglected the linguistic potential of its children, and she makes informed useful and practicable suggestions which, if followed, would go a long way towards remedying the present far from satisfactory situation.

I sincerely hope that Laurie Makin's analysis and recommendations will be carefully considered and acted upon, particularly by educators, so that the potential bilingual development of all Australian children can be maximised.

George Saunders
Editor, ASLA
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Introduction

The familiar dictum, "It takes a community to educate a child" is another way of stating the notion that "[E]ducation is far too important to be left solely to professional educators" (Garcia & McLaughlin 1995:141). In this paper, the questions addressed are

- what climate exists in the Australian community today for children to grow up bilingually?
- what issues need to be considered if the existing climate is to be improved?
- what are the implications of the answers to these questions for families, for educators and for community support?

The bilingual climate

It can be argued that there are greater opportunities for bilingual development in Australia today than at any previous time in the last twenty years. We may have reached the level of critical mass, at which, with ongoing, concerted effort, great improvements can result.

There are a number of areas in which existing policies and practices support bilingual development:

First, positive policies exist at both state and federal levels. Australia leads the large, English-speaking countries of the world in having government policies which, in theory at least, support bilingual development. Some examples are as follows:

- The National Policy on Languages (Lo Bianco 1987) supports the concepts of
  1. English for all - in recognition of the fact that English is Australia's shared language of communication, and
  2. a language other than English for all - in recognition of global changes which put increasing pressures on everyone to be able to communicate beyond their own linguistic and cultural group.

- "Australia's Language: The Australian Language and Literacy Policy" (Dawkins 1991), the federal policy document designed to take us into the 20th century, states clearly, "[I]nternational and Australian evidence suggests that, where possible, literacy should be established first in the child's first language. Bilingual programs are generally the most effective way of doing this" (2:79).

- The National Goals of Schooling support languages education for all students and this notion has been reflected in moves by all States to make languages a key learning area. A 1994 COAG (Council of Australian Governments) report sees languages, in particular, some Asian languages, as becoming a normal feature of general education for succeeding generations.

- The Federal Coalition's statement on education says, "the Coalition recognises the value of second language learning and of the maintenance of the first language for those students whose first language is not English...A Coalition Government will continue to support, in collaboration with States and Territories, both the teaching of LOTE (Languages Other Than English) and the continued operation of community language programs in Government and non-Government schools" (7).
- There is policy support for diversity in education with a growing number of ethnic schools and Saturday schools.

Second, there is increased support for bilingual development in terms of community attitudes. The "global village" is becoming more and more of a reality every day. As LoBianco (1994:19) writes, "population mobility...works towards making multiple perspectives and multiculturalism possible...the nature and types of population movements are accelerating at a rate that we can't even predict...". In Australia, international trade is of increasing importance to the economy. Largely because of the imperatives of economic rationalism, Australia has, over the last few years, reconceptualised its role in the Asia-Pacific. Part of this reconceptualisation includes increased interest in bilingualism - at least in some languages. And although there have been expressions of dissatisfaction about recent immigration programs, a recent Sydney Morning Herald/AGB-McNair poll showed that approximately 60% of respondents agreed with multiculturalism;

Third, there is now much research from around the world which supports the benefits of bilingual education. *There is absolutely no evidence that speaking more than one language is bad for you!* On the contrary, studies over the last thirty years (e.g., Peal & Lambert 1962, Lambert & Tucker 1972, Cummins 1979, Genesee 1987, Kessler & Quinn 1987, Campos 1995) have supported the notion of benefits for children who become bilingual to a reasonably high level - benefits quite apart from the benefits of actually speaking two (or more) languages. Such benefits include demonstration of more sensitivity in communicating in different contexts, increased mental

flexibility, concept formation, categorisation abilities, and metalinguistic awareness. Tunmer & Myhill (1984) suggest that increased metalinguistic awareness in turn contributes to successful literacy development. However, the benefits of bilingual development are not invariable. They will not be fully realised unless both languages are reasonably well developed, at least to the concrete operational level (Cummins' threshold hypothesis).

Young children who are growing up bilingually are aware, much earlier than monolingual children are likely to be, that languages are phenomena with particular structures and functions and ways of operating, and that they can be objects of reflection and discussion. The following children are five years old and attending kindergarten (the first year of school) in a large, multicultural primary school in New South Wales. They had been working in a small group. One of the children left the group, saying as he left, "Ciao". This sparked the following discussion among the children who were left:

> *Child One:* Ciao'. Kevin, does your mum and dad say 'ciao'? It says goodbye. It's Italian. I don't speak Italian. What do you speak?
> *Child Two:* German.
> *Child One:* You speak Germany?
> *Child Two:* German. (Makin, Campbell & Jones Diaz 1995:84)

These children are already demonstrating impressive metalinguistic awareness for five year olds. They know that:

- different languages exist;
- languages have names;
- the names of languages are different from the names of places;
- different words belong to different languages;
- words in different languages can have similar meanings;
- different people speak different languages
- words from one language can be borrowed and used by speakers of other languages.

These children have developed this knowledge through their personal experience, experience of which monolingual children are largely deprived.

Fourth, there are technological developments such as the internet, satellite broadcasts and computer-assisted language programs which open up ways of expanding program provision (for example, making LOTE programs and professional development programs available via satellite to schools in rural and remote locations) and of linking interested groups (for example, through school-developed home pages or home pages designed by bilingual families).

Nevertheless, the picture is not completely rosy. We may see light at the end of the tunnel, but we need to be careful that the light is not that of an oncoming train! There are still many hurdles to overcome if opportunities for bilingual development in Australia are

to be maximised. We are still grappling with many unresolved issues which need to be addressed by families, educators and the wider community. The issues overlap, and many are common to all three groups. However, some are of more immediate concern to one group than another.

Some issues for families

1. Effort versus result For immigrant families, the question is often whether the game is worth the candle - whether it is worth trying to maintain the home language, often in the face of little community support. Families must decide, when their first child is born, whether to embark upon a journey which may be very difficult, perhaps risking family disruption and children's resistance. With the birth of successive children, the scenario can become increasingly difficult, with siblings often opting to use English with each other whatever language they use with their parents. Another scenario which may emerge is one in which the home language has not been maintained and the children are evidently losing it in the face of outside pressures and inside ambivalence. Parents may wonder if it is too late to embark upon a rescue mission.

For monolingual families who wish to give their children the benefits of becoming bilingual, the question is when and how to support bilingual development. Folk wisdom has always advised the earlier the better, and this does appear to be the case if children are learning two languages from birth (i.e., simultaneously). However, as this is not usually the case in monolingual families, the second language must generally be learned successively. Research does not support folk wisdom in this case. COAG (1994) recommends Year 3 of

primary school as an appropriate time to begin to learn a new language.

Paradoxically, there may be more support for monolingual families than for bilingual families, as bilingualism in this situation is often chosen by upwardly mobile families whose voice may be heard more loudly in times of economic rationalism.

Over the last decades, Australia has wasted many linguistic resources through neglect of the languages which children have brought with them when they enter preschool or school. At the same time, the government has devoted increasing funds to teaching new languages to monolingual children.

Whether families are monolingual or bilingual, if children are to grow up to be fluent in two or more languages, families need to be clear about their reasons for wanting this, and they need to work out appropriate strategies for achieving their goals, for example:

- a consistent model of language use in the home (McLaughlin 1987, Goodz 1987). This may take the form of one person - one language, one situation - one language, or one time - one language;
- careful selection of children's carers and, later, teachers to ensure that they are both willing and able to support the family's language goals;

- the building of networks to provide situations in which languages other than English are used socially. If there is no reason to use a language other than English, children will not do so in the longer term;
- the collection of resources which support language use, eg, videos, books, games.

Most bilinguals code-switch, i.e., use more than one language in the same conversation. There is some debate about the effects of this natural interaction habit on young children who are growing up bilingually, with some educators advising adherence to a strict one person - one language pattern ("Grammont's Principle", described in Hamers & Blanc 1988), and others (for example, Duran 1994) seeing it as functional, purposeful and natural, an important part of a bilingual individual's cognitive development.

2. A Second issue which often arises for parents who speak a language other than English at home, and who want their children to become literate in the home language, is whether to try themselves to teach children to read and write in the home language or whether to concentrate on oral language. Literacy in English is very important in terms of school success because of the high emphasis on English language literacy in the Australian educational system. Families may also want their children to become literate in the home language and may see home tutoring as the best available option.

In most modern societies, children's literacy development is primarily the responsibility of the teacher, although support from families is a critical feature in success. This should be the case in the development of biliteracy just as it is the case in the development of monoliteracy. Parents of any language background (including English) should not have to take on the primary responsibility of teaching their children to read and write. This should be a major function of the educational system. However, families play a central part in helping their children develop literacy skills without directly teaching them. Enjoyment, habitude and usefulness are the keys.

If children are read to regularly, told stories, sung songs and rhymes, if they see letters being received and sent, shopping lists being written, books, newspapers and magazines read, if they visit the library regularly, - all of this develops their enjoyment of literacy and their understanding that it serves useful and enjoyable functions.

It also increases the range of language use and of experiences - both imaginative and factual - to which the children are exposed.

If families want to ensure that their children learn to read and write in the home language, then avenues outside the home need to sought through which family efforts can be maximised - for example, within the school's languages education programs or through a Saturday school.

There is much evidence to support the notion that we only learn to read once. If, for example, an English-speaker learns to read in English in primary school and then, at high school level, begins to study a new language, the student does not have to learn to read again. Much knowledge of the process, strategies and functions of literacy can be transferred to the new language. Roberts (1994) summarises the implications of current knowledge by stating that the first language should be the language of initial literacy and that this is beneficial to the subsequent development of literacy in a new language.

3. Another issue for families may be whether to correct a child's home language utterances or not. Some errors are particularly important to some families in some languages, e.g., markers of respect which, if not corrected, may mean that the child unwittingly insults others. Other errors need to be addressed when they mean that what is said is not factual (as opposed to not being

grammatically correct). On the other hand, constant correction reduces children's willingness to use the home language at all and inhibits their production. On the whole, I believe that it is better to keep correction to a minimum, do it in a supportive way when it is seen as necessary, and concentrate on providing children with appropriate input and a range of situations which assist them to extend their home language use.

4. A further issue is whether to use the standard variety of a language or its local variety as the medium for oral communication within the home. A decision on this issue must be arrived at by each family in light of their language goals, for example, whether the home language is primarily to be a medium for communication with family and local community speech members or whether it is seen as improving employment opportunities. It may be possible, if desired, to develop a strategy to enable children to become bidialectal as well as bilingual.

The question of language variety is one on which it is essential that families and educators consult to ensure that all parties understand what is happening and why. Some State policies (e.g., the NSW Board of Studies) express a preference for the standard or national version of the target language. Some schools may choose the classical variety of a language to ensure a common medium through which to teach religion when children from different countries speak different varieties of a language. If the language used in a program is very

different from the home variety and this is not taken into account by both educators and parents, the children may be considered to be background speakers of the language, whereas, in fact, they are not because the varieties are too different. In such a situation, children will experience difficulties in the educational program and will need appropriate support.

Issues for educators

1. Firstly, there is the issue of equity. If opportunities for languages education cannot be provided to all children, this can sometimes be used as a rationalisation for not providing it to any group. A related issue is, if only some groups can be catered for, then which should they be? - monolingual English-speakers, members of strong community language groups, members of weak community language groups, members of endangered language groups, newly arrived adolescents who need continued cognitive development in their home language while they learn English - to whom do we give priority? Often, the choice is driven by pragmatic considerations - what languages there is funding available for, what languages are spoken by available staff, or what languages are most valued by a community at a particular point in time.

A related issue is the question of national unity. Australia does not have ethnic ghettos to the extent that occurs, for example, in the United States. Most Australians of many different backgrounds see this as a very positive factor. To cater for children of a particular language background, enough background speakers of the language to form a viable group are necessary. Many people believe that the children should also be of the same age or Year level. Would implementing an extensive system of languages education lead to increased separation and isolation of language communities?

2. A second group of issues relates to language programs. These include choice of program type, medium, content, implementation, evaluation, and duration. Should we promote bilingual education - and if so, should it be transitional, two-way, full? What about immersion programs - who should take them and at what age? Should language be a subject as in many CL (Community Languages) and LOTE (Languages Other Than English) courses or a medium through which curriculum subjects such as mathematics or music are taught? And where are we going to find the teachers?!

Research into the effectiveness of bilingual education in the US has had mixed results. As Campos (1995:34) expresses it, "[t]he evaluation of bilingual education has been plagued by the preponderance of ineffective bilingual programs in ineffective schools". One problem affecting evaluation of the success of bilingual programs, particularly in the United States, has been a focus on short term transitional programs which have as their goal transition to English-only education rather than bilingual development. Much recent research (e.g., Cummins 1979, Bialystok 1991) suggests that children must attain a reasonably high level of competence in both languages if the cognitive and social benefits of bilingualism are to be most evident. One implication of this research is that bilingual programs must have long term evaluation strategies and that program implementation must take into account the fact

that the benefits of bilingual education may not be clear in the short term.

Many language programs currently operating in Australian schools are Community Language programs which may not occupy enough space in the school day to enable maximal development of children's home languages. We know that it takes five to seven years to attain native-like fluency in a language. Language programs must have realistic expectations of the outcomes which are practical given the time available to the program. It is unlikely that children will become fluent bilinguals in a program which introduces a new language for 2 or 3 hours a week, even over a number of years.

Programs of brief duration, transitional programs, programs with no planned articulation between sectors such as preschool, primary school and high school, or even between one Year level in school and the next, may do little good in the long term. Skutnabb-Kangas (1988) says that "a couple of hours a week of mother tongue instruction for a minority child is more therapeutic cosmetics than language teaching". Integrative programs, which use many children's languages in the same program but for a minor part of the day, eg, singing songs in different languages or comparing greetings in different languages, can be very valuable as consciousness-raising activities in which language awareness and an interest in different languages is fostered. However, such programs are not sufficient to develop fluency in a language.

The preschool years deserve much more attention than they have received to date. Milne & Clarke (1993) note that children who are in full time day care for approximately four years prior to school entry may have spent as many hours in the child care centre as they will spend in school during the whole of their primary school years. It would seem therefore that the preschool years deserve particular attention in consideration of language development.

A major question is how best to use the preschool years in terms of language development - whether to use the time to develop the home language (either English or another language) or whether to implement bilingual preschool programs. Bilingual programs would be an advance on most current Australian programs which are predominantly or entirely English medium programs. On the other hand, Wong Fillmore (1991) warns that even bilingual programs may not be sufficient to prevent children from home language backgrounds other than English from losing their home language because English is such a strong force in American (and Australian) society. She advocates home language only programs in the preschool years for language minority children.

Children from an English-speaking background who are growing up in Australia have, on the other hand, no fear of losing their home language. If they are not at an educational disadvantage because of other factors such as poverty or disability, and if a new language is

introduced under the age of three in a way which is enjoyable, functional and natural, children may well begin to become bilingual in a situation of simultaneous bilingual acquisition.

3. A third issue is expectations of children by educators, families, and by the children themselves. It is particularly important for minority bilingual children to be provided with developmentally appropriate, cognitively challenging activities which prepare them for the abstract, decontextualised language which they will meet as they progress through school. Obviously, this is easier to do if children can use the language in which they are most fluent.
The COAG report earlier recommends Year 3 as being the most appropriate starting age for the learning of another language. The report is, of course, referring to languages other than English. But, if Year 3 is the best time to start a new language, then, presumably, children from homes in which languages other than English are spoken, should undertake their first three years of schooling in their home language, just as English-speaking children do.

Both educators and families need to have realistically high expectations for children. Sometimes, educators can err on the side of not expecting enough of bilingual children. Sometimes families can err on the side of expecting too much. On the whole, it is probably better to have expectations which are a little too high than a little too low, although extremes of either kind can be damaging. All children need to learn to use their languages in a wide range of situations with

different people to talk about different things. They need to use language for a wide range of purposes - evaluating, hypothesising, reasoning, discussing alternatives, telling jokes, forming relationships, imagining, and so on. It is not sufficient for children to have only social skills in a language if they are to reach their potential in that language.

Some educators, particularly if they are monolingual themselves, may worry that having two (or more) languages may lead to linguistic and/or cognitive delay in children. Many earlier research studies (now discredited for a number of reasons including confusion of linguistic and social factors) supported such concern. Certain characteristics of children's speech may worry educators. Children's vocabulary may appear to be more restricted, although, if the child's vocabulary in both languages is checked, bilingual children generally match or surpass monolingual children (Bialystok 1991). Children may mix languages. As stated earlier, there are different views on this, with some researchers suggesting that it is a sign that the child is confusing the languages. Others suggest that competent bilingual adults normally mix languages in sophisticated, systematic and functional ways and that children do so as well. Whichever the case, most children seem to use the appropriate language most of the time by the time they reach the age of three if they have been exposed to both languages from birth.

Bilingual children appear to go through the same basic developmental linguistic milestones (eg. single words, holophrases, two word utterances, telegraphic speech) as monolingual children, but because their task is more complex, there may be a difference in the rate at which different stages are reached.

Döpke , McNamara & Quinn (1991:45) report that several studies "suggest that bilingual children enter the concrete operational stage and the formal operational stage at an earlier age than do monolingual children". Piaget used to remark on what he called the American question regarding child development - "How can we get them to do it earlier?". One answer may well be, provide more bilingual education!

4. Finally, there are issues of teacher preparation and staff credentials. Most teacher preparation programs in Australia are staffed primarily by monolingual English speakers. It is a particular challenge for monolingual teacher educators to respond to the needs of an increasingly diverse population. Part of the response must be to familiarise themselves with research studies of bilingual children so that appropriate information can be conveyed to students in mainstream teacher education courses such as child development or literacy development, and so that appropriate practicum programs can be developed.

One area in which it is very important for monolingual teacher educators to be aware of current research is the issue of advice to families on what language to use in the home. It is difficult for families to communicate their feelings, values, ways of thinking, and so on, in a language in which they are not completely fluent. Educators who believe the fallacy that children will necessarily learn English better if families switch to English may unwittingly cause emotional problems, disruptions in family communication and inappropriate changes to the roles played by different family members. It may help the child's English more to be exposed to high quality interaction in the home language rather than to restricted interaction in English.

Bilingual teacher educators have an important role to play in building networks with their monolingual colleagues. Team teaching and joint research projects offer opportunities to utilise an increased range of skills and experiences. Monolinguals must be part of the dialogue concerning bilingual development. Without their support and involvement, opportunities for bilingual development cannot be maximised. A central issue for the mainstream community is acceptance of a share in the responsibility for bilingual development and to demonstrate this through public support. This is a particular challenge for Australians who have grown up in a very different Australia. Eva Cox spoke recently in the Boyer lecture series (1995) of the need to redevelop social capital in Australia. An important part of this capital is the children of a society.

Many bilingual immigrants to Australia have problems gaining recognition in Australia for teaching qualifications which were gained overseas. Bridging programs have an important role to play in this area. There are currently a number of moves to apply to universities for accreditation of various professional development programs. This is a positive move, ensuring a degree of comparability in terms of the academic credibility of credentialling programs and giving a relatively unstressful introduction to Australian tertiary education for many people. However, often these programs are seen as the beginning of an Australian-based qualification without acknowledgment of previously gained qualifications.

Some recognition of prior qualifications and experience would help meet the need for qualified teachers in a range of community languages. Teachers in bilingual programs need fluency in the language they are teaching. They should not have to be co-learners with their students. They also need a knowledge of child development, of first and second language development, of cultural and political issues, of language teaching approaches, and, if the language is used as medium not subject, they need knowledge of the content they are teaching through the medium of the LOTE. All teachers need information about bilingual development, language teaching strategies and background information on issues facing bilingual families.

Implications for families, educators and the community

Makin, Campbell & Jones Diaz (1995:69) list six Key Principles to guide early childhood educators in maximising the rich potential of diversity. They are

1. Families are key participants in children's language learning.
2. Children's home languages should be maintained and developed.
3. Programs should be culturally as well as linguistically relevant.
4. In language-rich environments, all children can explore other languages as well as their home language.
5. Bilingual children have specific language needs and individual approaches to learning languages.
6. Being bilingual is beneficial for all children.

Underlying these Principles is a respect for diversity and a desire to maximise the potential bilingual development of children. It should be completely unacceptable for any children to have their early education placed in the hands of teachers who can neither understand them nor communicate with them. This is a particularly unacceptable situation for children who, in such a communicatively-challenged situation, are also competing with native speakers of the teacher's language. It is triply wrong if the children can be said to be at risk educationally, e.g., children affected by poverty or disability. Even if there were not as many benefits possible through languages education, such inequity should not be tolerated.

Yet this situation is, in reality, the one facing many children in Australia today. If it is to change, a unified effort is essential. It takes a community to educate a child - families, educators and other community members; monolinguals and bilinguals. Common goals and joint advocacy have best chance of success. There are many areas in which joint advocacy may help. Some suggestions are:

1. supporting the current push for a children's commissioner. The Australian Early Childhood Association "recommends that the Commonwealth establish a national agency to coordinate government policy affecting children, to monitor the implementation of programs, policies and laws affecting children, to examine proposals for children's rights legislation, and appoint a federal children's commissioner to monitor compliance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child" (Vaughan & Cahir 1996:40). This would be another avenue through which linguistic and cultural maintenance and bilingual development might be considered.

2. improving communication lines and communication networks. There need to be ongoing statewide mechanisms for collecting and disseminating information on the demographics of educational facilities, on local resources, on available programs and on program quality. It is not sufficient merely to add on extra educational programs. Existing programs need to be re-

examined and re-defined so that they serve all children well and prepare them to function effectively in today's diverse world. Schools in some school districts in California now use a common "report card" to inform the community about the characteristics and strengths of their school.

3. lobbying for increased opportunities for children and increased choices for families, including opportunities for bilingual education and funding for innovative programs, e.g., applications for demonstration project grants or dissemination funds to share program successes. I would like to see recognised committees of advocates, researchers, educators and parents in each state which could be contacted for advice and information by institutions involved in the development of policies and programs to ensure that key stakeholder groups have access at the early stages of development. Representation of ethnic communities should be part of all curriculum development and evaluation processes.

4. demanding increased services for language programs at both state and federal levels and closer links between support services. There are several excellent resource centers serving the community, e.g., in Sydney, the Fairfield Multicultural Resource Centre and in Melbourne, the Free Kindergarten Association Multicultural Resource Centre. These are centres which take a holistic view of bilingual development, producing resources for families as well as early childhood staff. There are also State

initiatives aimed specifically at teachers and principals, e.g., in NSW, the LOTE Newsletters put out by the Department of School Education and the Association of Independent Schools, and the generic languages framework being developed by the NSW Board of Studies. But often dissemination of knowledge about such resources could be extended. Closer networks also need to be established between individuals and groups which focus on children prior to formal school entry and those which focus on children in schools.

5. being vigilant. Liddicoat (1996) believes that a shift in the language policy agenda is evident in increased emphasis on the importance of English, a narrow economic rationale for languages education, a divorce of multicultural policy from language policy and less emphasis on first language maintenance.

These are some of the areas to which all stakeholders in the issue of raising bilingual children can unite. There are also specific sector-related tasks.

For families and other members of the community, commitment to involvement in local education programs is very important. Families need to lobby for continuing and increasing choice of language programs and must make clear to schools and to politicians that a subtractive model of education, in which the child's home language is replaced by English, is not acceptable.

For educators, the time is long overdue for a serious review of teacher education programs. More bilingual students need to be recruited and, when enrolled, offered an appropriate range of course offerings to help them maximise their potential. For monolingual students, there should be opportunities for language study and cross-cultural studies as part of their core program. For overseas-trained bilingual teachers, appropriate bridging courses need to be available.

A useful addition to the range of teaching qualifications available in Australia would be a recognised state or federal qualification in cross-cultural teaching. This would offer opportunities to consider overseas-gained qualifications as well as building strengths in the Australian education system. Employers would then be able to see clearly on student transcripts whether graduates have strengths in teaching to linguistic and cultural diversity.

The state of California has recently introduced two new teaching credentials which may soon become mandatory:

1. CLAD - Cross-cultural, Language and Academic Development, and
2. BCLAD - Bilingual, Cross-cultural, Language and Academic Development. This second credential requires demonstrated proficiency in a second language; knowledge of research, theory and methods of second language acquisition; and knowledge of culture.

These are "top-up" credentials, i.e., they follow attainment of an initial teaching qualification. They are the basis of an innovative education program which also includes, as a compulsory course component, ongoing work by students in a family literacy centre.

Tertiary educators can develop networks with schools and centres, particularly ones in which their students undertake practicum placements. They can be of assistance to schools implementing bilingual programs, helping present a strong rationale for innovative programs, providing summaries of relevant research, offering assistance in developing teaching methodology, and helping develop and implement appropriate evaluation strategies. Centres, schools and education authorities can, in turn, support their university colleagues by pressing universities to ensure that graduating teachers have basic competency in cross-cultural teaching.

For all community members, acceptance of their shared responsibility for children as the community's most important resource, even when they are not directly involved in caring for individual children, is of central importance. Someone once said, "If you see a need, don't ask, 'Why doesn't somebody do something?' Ask, 'Why don't I do something?'" Or, to put it another way, "If you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem!" Children are our resources of the future and bilingual children are a special resource. It takes a community to educate a child.

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